

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

Routing Slip

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12.		

SUSPENSE

31 JUL 89 (10:30 A.M.)
Date

Action Officer:

Remarks:

No objection

GAH

31 Jul 89

Name/Date



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

July 28, 1989

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LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

OCA 2641-89

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer -

001 FILE

STAT

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SUBJECT: Defense proposed letter to Sen. Chaffee on S. 1328, a bill "to declare the policy of the United States regarding the protection of United States Government satellites against antisatellite attack and to limit the use of funds for testing any antisatellite weapon against an object in orbit around the earth."

The Office of Management and Budget requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President, in accordance with OMB Circular A-19.

A response to this request for your views is needed no later than 10:30 A.M., MONDAY, JULY 31, 1989 -- we will assume your agency has no comment if you do not respond within the period for views.

Questions should be referred to ANNETTE ROONEY/SUE THAU (395-7300), the legislative analyst in this office or to JIM NIX (395-3664).

Ronald K. Peterson

RONALD K. PETERSON FOR
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference

Enclosure

cc: T. Thiele
J. Eisenhower

C. B. Gray
S. Dotson

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Honorable John H. Chafee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Chafee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on S. 1328, a bill "to declare the policy of the United States regarding the protection of United States Government satellites against antisatellite attack and to limit the use of funds for testing any antisatellite weapon against an object in orbit around the Earth." Among other things, this bill would express the sense of Congress that the President should seek an agreement with the Soviets that would "provide the strictest possible limitations on the development, testing, production, and deployment of antisatellite weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union." It would also prohibit the testing of "any weapon" against an object in orbit unless the Soviets (a) have, since August 1982, conducted such a test, (b) have refused a request to deploy monitoring and verification technologies at their laser testing sites or (c) have refused to negotiate with us in good faith to establish limitations on antisatellite (ASAT) development, testing, production and deployment. Finally, the bill would require submission of a detailed report on ASAT systems and the survivability of U.S. satellites.

The basic premise of this bill is that the national security of the United States would be served if we were to continue to forego development and deployment of an ASAT system, provided the Soviets avoid the three actions listed above.

I strongly disagree with that premise. We need a U.S. ASAT capability. The Soviets have targeting satellites in low earth orbit that pose a threat to our terrestrial forces and those of our allies, and they also have an operational co-orbital ASAT system that poses a threat to some of our most critical low-earth orbit satellites. We need an ASAT capability both to counter the Soviet targeting satellites and to deter the use of the existing Soviet ASAT system. Currently, an imbalance exists. As Admiral Crowe has stated, "[t]o bring this strategic imbalance into equilibrium mandates that the United States develop and deploy an effective deterrent-in-kind ASAT capability; not for space supremacy or superiority, but to insure a measured, balanced response to Soviet space-based weapon systems and ASAT capability." Accordingly, we have requested funds for both kinetic and directed energy ASAT systems.

S. 1328 in effect would give the Soviets veto power over development and deployment of a U.S. ASAT system. As long as the

Soviets avoid the three actions that would lift the testing prohibition, we could not test an ASAT weapon. I would note at this point that a similar, more specific test ban derailed the F-15/Miniature Homing Vehicle ASAT system. In passing, I would also note that the proposed prohibition of the use of any funds "to test any weapon against an object in orbit" might well impinge upon the SDI program.

I also strongly object to the requirement of yet another report. The proliferating report requirements are absorbing too much of our resources for no good purpose. Surely, the close consideration of ASAT issues to be expected in the normal Congressional scrutiny of our funding requests would make the proposed ASAT report a redundant exercise.

In sum, I oppose this bill. The United States needs an operational ASAT capability. This bill, if enacted, would frustrate our efforts to obtain one.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of these views for your consideration and the consideration of your colleagues.